2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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grouped together in battle, and still eat together ceremoniously, e.g. at mourning feasts. The *kwanyireth* have their foreheads scarred in the same manner as commoners. Lines of scar marks are also made on the breast, across the shoulder blade, and two rectangular masses above the umbilicus; these are considered to have no tribal significance but are done for the sake of adornment and are said to be admired by the opposite sex.

We are indebted to Mr. Heasty for a note on Shilluk customs, which seem to indicate that the milk avoidances of the Nilotes are dependent on fear of contamination associated with the sexual act.

A young woman does not drink milk under any circumstances, though a woman who is nursing a baby may, as do old women past the reproductive age. Only small boys herd the cattle and milk them, for once a boy has reached maturity there is the danger that he may have had sexual contact, when if he milked, or handled manure, or even walked among the cattle in their pens, he would cause them to become sterile. These beliefs are held so strongly that a child who goes to his neighbours to drink milk must have a bath before he returns home, lest milk might adhere to him, be mixed with food, and be eaten by someone who was unclean. If a man has had sexual relations with his wife or another he is considered unclean and does not drink milk until the sun has set the following day. Mr. Heasty could not discover that anyone objected to drinking milk drawn by himself, nor does anyone avoid taking milk and meat together. The pottery vessels used for milk are not used for any other purpose.

A woman cooks for her husband and leaves the hut while he eats, but it is not shameful for men and women to be seen eating together, and after a man has eaten the main part of a meal a woman and her friends, usually her unmarried *nyiwa* (if her *gol* is not distant), may sit and eat while he continues his meal. A newly married couple do not eat together. Small reed mats called *paro* are used to put over pots of food to keep off flies and dust, and out of respect a woman might stand one of these upright to screen her face while eating or drinking.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

439 177 462 512

here articles of purchase and sale are calculated in silver currency.

The daily work of the women is cooking, carrying water, cleaning the house and yard, etc. During the time of farmwork they help the men in cultivating the fields.

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FOOD

The staple food is dura. It is cooked, baked into a bread *(kwen)*, roasted, brewed and, when green, eaten raw. For different kinds of food vide page 102. Their diet is rather monotonous, dura being its constant chief component. The dura is pounded and ground. The mortar is either a log of wood hollowed out, or a flat excavation in the ground, lined out with clay. The mill-stones — a large and a small one, with the latter the grinding is done — are secured from districts west of the Shilluk country. — Fire is made by twirling a hard stick on a soft piece of wood.

Besides dura they eat sesame, duchn, maize, beans, some onions, various grass seeds, the seeds of the lotus plant and of some kinds of nymphaeae. The fruit of several trees, as deleib, nabag, etc. also serve as food; they even rob ant hills to procure the winter store of hoarded seeds. White ants, when in the winged state, are a delicacy to them. — Milk is used in the household in many ways: it is drunk fresh, sour, or boiled, or dura meals are prepared with it. [231] They also make butter, by shaking or rolling the milk in a gourd. — As domestic animals are almost never slain, meat forms no part of the daily food, but is rather an exceptional delicacy, which is, however, sought for with eagerness; of game they hardly leave any piece uneaten, skin and bowels not excepted; [171] they do not even despise dead animals. The blood of killed animals is kept and cooked, but they do not tap the blood from living cattle, as is the custom with the Bari and Masai. — Generally they prefer the meat of castrated animals.

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Two chief meals are taken daily; one from nine to ten in the morning, and the second at sunset.

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BREWING OF BEER

A large quantity of the dura the people reap is used in cooking merisa or beer. The grain is put into jars and water poured on it. Thus it is left till the grain begins to sprout. Then it is spread in the sun to dry, and then pounded or ground; this wet meal is mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put a second time into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on it; the jars are covered with small mats and allowed to remain a day or two, until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week. Though this drink is slightly intoxicating, it does not seem to do great harm; it is very nourishing, and the natives regard it rather as a food than a beverage.

among the Shilluk that he was empowered to suppress internal feuds, that he actually did so with the assistance of an army of neutrals, and that, though the punishments inflicted on the guilty sections of the community were severe and included seizure of property and the enslavement of the guilty parties, little resistance was shown. At the same time, there are few examples cited in Shilluk tradition which date back to days earlier than the first alien administration. Such methods resemble the methods employed by those who were used as agents in Turkish times to maintain some kind of order. They are also reminiscent of Arab procedures, and it must be remembered that the Shilluk were influenced by Arab contacts.[1] They are in keeping also with the methods employed during the *Mahdia*.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that the *reth* has always had recognized functions as an arbitrator in blood-feuds. These functions are both purely secular, in the attempt to reconcile warring factions, and ritual, in the removal of prohibitions raised in feuds.[2] It is more than probable that in early days the *reth* would take no action unless he was certain that the two parties wished for peace. In Titherington's account we hear that, 'The *reth* walked among them and briefly addressed them and they answered that they wanted peace. . . . The taboo on the families at feud eating together, is removed by the *reth*.'[3]

Hofmayr says: 'When the number of the dead and wounded on both sides is equal, they stop fighting. The King will hold court and punish the offender who is in the wrong.' The idea that feuds cease when the participants are tired of fighting and of a perpetual state of insecurity is stressed again and again in reports. It is at this point that the *reth*'s intervention is accepted, and it seems to me doubtful whether he would normally intervene in any other circumstances.

Indemnity for Homicide

The present recognized indemnity for wilful homicide among the Shilluk is ten head of cattle. There have been frequent attempts by the Administration during the course of the last thirty years to raise this number, as a deterrent, but these attempts do not appear to have been either effective or generally accepted by the tribe. The traditional number demanded is also in doubt. Thomson, in an unpublished report, says: 'In the past blood-money for a killing was ten head of cattle to the deceased's family and ten to the *reth*. Later it became ten to the deceased's family, five to the *reth* and five to the Government. It is now (since 1932) ten head of cattle to the family of the deceased only.' I have sometimes heard it said that in *reth* Fadiet's time (1903–17) it was only seven head,[4] but it was raised to twenty, of which the *reth* took half, by orders of *reth* Fafiti when he first succeeded to the throne. It is also said that in the old days a girl was sometimes handed over instead of cattle, and although intermarriage between people at feud is considered wrong unless the full peace ceremonies have been completed, this girl was taken in marriage by one of the kinsmen of the dead man. If, by reason of some kinship relationship with the deceased, she fell within the prohibited degrees of marriage, she would be accepted as a

[1] Cf. The Baggara *Khawa*: خاوة, whereby neutral tribal segments would band together to punish wrongdoers, seizing their possessions, which were handed over to the deceased's family.

[2] Such as the prohibition on eating together and on intermarriage.

[3] Titherington, unpublished records.

[4] Sometimes quoted as being current in *reth* Kur's time (deposed 1903) too.

16: Cann G-5 (ca. 1928) 1929 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Houses are swept out soon after dawn by older women and small girls, and they are responsible for the collection of firewood for cooking purposes.

Very soon after the return of the water-carrying party the sound of dura pounding is heard on all sides, and this work and the preparation of native beer for the household goes on intermittently all day; the meal times for men being about 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., while the women snatch meals at odd hours.

At the time of writing every spare moment of the day is spent by the women in sowing the dura and maize crop around the village, the work proceeding steadily from dawn to dusk.

Even after dark the women have to finish the preparation and serve the evening meal to their men, and, as this is the main meal of the day, woe betide the wife who has not prepared it in time or to the satisfaction of her lord!

At about 5.30 p.m. the small boys return with the goats and sheep, and these—after having been re-united with their offspring—are turned into the *luaks* for the night.

Then smoke fires are lighted in readiness for the cattle which are herded in at dusk, tied up with head ropes, and milked; these duties keep nearly all the men busy until after 7 p.m., soon after which the cultivators return from their labours.

Rather than call the Shilluk a lazy race, let us say that they understand the art of taking their ease restfully!

18: Howell E-5 (1937) 1941 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

joined, whatever the new formation may be. The regrouping of sub-divisions is often the subject of heated controversy, particularly between the two sub-divisions who will be separated by the new line of distinction. It is apparently preferable to remain the highest sub-division of the newly formed lower age-set and thereby acquire special privileges and duties. At the last *Ngol* ceremony held in the settlement of *Yom Dok Alal*, the two sub-divisions between whom the distinction was to be made actually came to blows. The age-set A, having retired, participates no longer in warfare nor in the ceremonies associated with the organization.

The sub-divisions of any age-set are known in Shilluk as "head," "neck" and "middle" respectively. Thus while the "head," "neck" and "middle" sub-divisions of B occupy the same position in a new status, the two or three sub-divisions below them are "head," "neck" and "middle" of C. On ceremonial occasions when the age-sets function as such, the highest age-set is privileged to eat the back and chest of any animal provided, while the lower will eat of the hump and legs only. This division of meat is rigidly observed and any infringment is severely punished. This rule is particularly enforced at the *Ngol* when a bull is slaughtered and ceremonially divided and eaten—to emphasise the newly acquired privileges of the age-set in the higher status.

After this the newly appointed *Bañ* who will be war-leader of the senior age-set, is formally elected and is carried jubilantly round the settlement on the shoulders of his age-mates. Frequently this procession enters the territory of another settlement, the boasts of the younger warriors bring out the young men of the neighbouring district, and fighting occurs.

The *Bañ* has no administrative or political functions and has no connection with the *Jago* of the settlement. It is his duty to organize mobilization and to preside at communal feasts at which the age-sets assemble. According to some informants he is assisted in the cultivation of his fields by his age-mates.

After the ceremony is over, each age-set is given a new name, usually taken from some current event or from the colour of the bull

18: Howell E-5 (1937) 1941 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

to be their duty to aid him. The arrangement is merely reciprocal. At the beer feast afterwards, however, the guests are arranged according to their respective sub-divisions. The two senior sub-divisions present enter the hut of their host before the others and it is their privilege to taste the beer first and approve it. They remain in the hut for sometime for they have had an exhausting day in the fields and are thirsty. Outside the hut in the courtyard are grouped the lower sub-divisions, eagerly awaiting their share which is passed out to them when those inside are satisfied with the quality of the beer. Possibly another sub-division is then allowed to enter the hut if there is room at the back.

The sub-divisions are grouped inside the hut in ascending order of seniority and the leader of the senior sub-division present, (*Pagy*) sits near the door. The *Pagy* has a special gourd which is kept full of beer by the man next him. Etiquette is rigidly observed and everyone is careful to sit in the right place and take his turn at the beer. No women are present except the host's wife or wives who sit at the back and serve the beer. Every age-set has its own song and this is sung by those inside the hut while the young men outside take up the chorus.

The existence within the settlement of organized age-sets limited by territorial boundaries is a factor which should ensure co-ordination and peace between the different lineages. The Shilluk say that age-mates will not fight each other. In fact this is an exaggeration for the sense of loyalty and mutual obligation between age-mates is not constant or strong. The reason for this is the rarity of occasions in which the age-set organization functions to-day and the very limited purpose to which it is put. In reality, mutual ties and observances practiced by age-mates are quite outside the deeper and more permanent ties of kinship and the Shilluk is not bothered by perpetually conflicting emotions. The age-sets do not operate as such until all lineages are bound together by a common cause apart from and in a different context to internal bickerings which are not infrequent.

Political authority is not now derived from the age-set system, but from the powerful position in the settlement of the dominant lineage.

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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narrow circular hole in the ground about a foot deep, and steadily pounded with a heavy, six-foot pole wielded with all the strength a young pair of arms and shoulders can bring to the task. The coarse flour which results from this operation is soaked in water and then ground again, this time between two hard, rough stones. The flour is ready for use; it is mixed with water and boiled in a shallow iron dish to make a thick porridge, and this, flavoured with a little salt if that is available, and mixed with a little milk, constitutes the meal. Young women, however, are denied the luxury of milk, unless they are nursing a baby.

By the time the women have returned from the river, ground the flour and cooked the porridge, it is already nine o'clock. If it is the dry season and there is no work to be done in the fields, the men have been sitting around since sunrise busy perhaps with some task such as making a grass rope or weaving a fish trap, or merely gossiping away the time until their food is ready. When a woman has cooked her husband's breakfast she takes it into the living hut, and then leaves while he eats. She never eats with him, though she may return later, before he has finished, and eat her own meal sitting apart; she may also join other women and eat with them. When breakfast is over the men resume their tasks, and if there is a nice part of the river bank shaded with trees, such as is to be found at Detwok, they will take their rope making and weaving materials or their fishing net and pass the day there pleasantly enough. The young boys untether the bleating sheep and goats which pour out of the village running in search of grass and water, followed by their herds who add to the din by yelling and whistling; the cattle follow at a more leisurely pace in charge of the older boys. Soon the village is empty of animals save for the mangy, half-starved dogs nosing about for scraps of food, and the scraggy chickens picking up grains of millet scattered here and there in the compound. The little girls appear, staggering under the weight of the fat babies they carry on their hips. The women and the older girls go about the never-ending household tasks, cleaning up after their untidy menfolk,

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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The body of the dead king, wrapped in a white cloth, lies in state in his capital of Fashoda. During the course of the second night it is taken secretly to a nearby village for temporary interment, for by tradition the body is not to be buried for about a year after the death of the king, but is placed in a hut which is sealed up. Traditionally, too, the youngest of his wives should be sealed up alive with him, and the hut allowed to fall into ruins and thus form a tomb for them, but happily this dreadful custom is no longer practised.

After an interval of about a year, the remains of the dead king are removed from their temporary resting place and taken, again by night and with secrecy, to his own village where they are buried in a grave dug in the floor of a hut. This is a signal for the people from all over the country to come in for the funeral dances. The number of people who attend the dances is indicative of the popularity that the late king enjoyed among his subjects, and so too is the number of cattle sacrificed. This may run into several hundreds, some of which are contributed by the family of the deceased, but most being the tribute of chiefs and people. The meat of the slaughtered animals is distributed among those taking part in the funeral ceremonies.

Two or three days after the king has been buried, on a day appointed, the warriors armed with spears and war shields and in well-ordered companies, each headed by a flag bearer and marshalled according to the district from which they come, encircle the outside of the village, singing songs in praise of Nyikang and the late king. They then enter the village and dance round the drums and the tomb, stopping at a concerted signal to kneel in homage to the dead, facing the tomb, clashing spear on shield and addressing funeral chants to the king. Once more they encircle the village, this time on the inside, visiting each of the late king's huts in turn, some stepping out of the ranks and peering into the empty huts as though searching for the king and then retiring to give place to the next contingent. Thus the funeral ceremonies continue for two or three days, but